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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/077,221	02/15/2002	Erich Horn	SWR-0077	3123

7590 03/11/2004
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EXAMINER

YAM, STEPHEN K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2878

DATE MAILED: 03/11/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/077,221

Applicant(s)

HORN ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen Yam

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AW

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 and 15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 and 15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on December 11, 2003 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Jones et al. US Patent No. 6,363,164.

Regarding Claim 1, Jones et al. teach (see Fig. 1a) a method for performing a test for acceptability in the acceptance of bank notes by automatic vending machines, the method comprising feeding (using (18)) a bank note to a digitalization station (12) via a transport unit (18), at least partially digitizing the bank note to create digitized data (see Col. 5, lines 64-67), comparing (14) the digitized data with a stored data of bank notes (see Col. 15, lines 44-50) belonging to a currency system scanned in ahead of time in a computer unit (see Col. 21, lines 40-48 and Col. 23, lines 20-37), the computer unit performs a determination of value (see Col.

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18, lines 16-20 and Col. 20, lines 47-51), and renders an automatic decision regarding acceptability (see Col. 18, lines 15-20), if the automatic decision regarding acceptability is negative (see Col. 12, lines 53-55), generating an image of the digitized data in order to allow its visual inspection by a service employee (see Col. 12, lines 53-63), who then renders a final decision regarding acceptability (see Col. 12, lines 64-66).

Regarding Claim 2, Jones et al. teach the digitizing of the bank note accomplished by scanning (see Col. 5, lines 61-65).

Regarding Claim 3, Jones et al. teach performing an image data comparison in form of data comparison (see Col. 23, lines 21-26).

Regarding Claim 5, Jones et al. teach the service employee via keyboard input registering the final decision regarding acceptance (see Col. 12, lines 64-66).

Regarding Claim 7, Jones et al. teach (see Fig. 1a) a device used in automatic vending machines to accept bank notes, with a test for acceptability, comprising at least one unit (16) for receiving a bank note, a transport/feed unit (18), a digitization unit (12), a computer unit (10, 15), an image display unit (display within (13)), an input unit (keyboard within (13)), and a unit (16/18/20a) for returning (see Col. 6, lines 22-25), advancing (see Col. 6, lines 11-20), collecting (see Col. 13, lines 23-34), and stacking (see Col. 13, lines 23-34) the bank notes, wherein at least the unit for receiving a bank note and the image display unit are disposed in one location (see Col. 12, line 66 to Col. 13, line 2).

Regarding Claim 8, Jones et al. teach the digitalization unit as a scanner (see Col. 5, lines 61-65).

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Regarding Claim 10, Jones et al. teach the image display unit as a monitor (see Col. 12, lines 63-64).

Regarding Claim 11, Jones et al. teach the input unit as a keyboard (see Col. 12, lines 64-66).

Regarding Claims 12 and 13, Jones et al. teach supplemental signal units for optical and acoustic indicators (see Col. 12, lines 28-31 and 46-49).

Regarding Claim 15, Jones et al. teach (see Fig. 1a) a device used in automatic vending machines to accept bank notes, with a test for acceptability, comprising at least one unit (16) for receiving a bank note, a transport/feed unit (18), a digitization unit (12) for at least partially digitizing the bank note to create digitized data (see Col. 5, lines 61-65), means for comparing (14) the digitized data with a stored data of bank notes (see Col. 15, lines 44-50) belonging to a currency system scanned in ahead of time (see Col. 21, lines 40-48 and Col. 23, lines 20-37), an image display unit (display within (13)), an input unit (keyboard within (13)), and a unit (16/18/20a) for returning (see Col. 6, lines 22-25), advancing (see Col. 6, lines 11-20), collecting (see Col. 13, lines 23-34), and stacking (see Col. 13, lines 23-34) the bank notes.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 4, 6, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones et al.

Regarding Claim 4, Jones et al. teach the method in Claim 1, according to the appropriate paragraph above. Jones et al. does not teach performing a detailed inspection of adjustable parameters to automatically render a preliminary decision between a direct rejection and an employee decision. It is well known in the art to adjust the brightness and contrast in a scanned image to improve the detectability of image patterns. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to inspect the brightness and contrast parameters of the scanned image to render another decision before an employee decision in the method of Jones et al., to optimize the scanning process and prevent unnecessary use of human intervention in a mostly-automated process.

Regarding Claim 6, Jones et al. teach the method as taught in Claim 1, according to the appropriate paragraph above. Jones et al. do not teach automatically marking the area of deviation prompting the negative automatic decision during the generation of the image. It is well known in the art that pattern recognition programs isolate specific areas within a document which encounter recognition problems and ask a user to manually identify the character. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to mark the area of deviation on the scanned image prompting the negative automatic decision in the method of Jones et al., to simplify the verification process for the service employee by concentrating on the specific area(s) which encounter the recognition difficulties so the service employee can more easily verify the denomination of the bank note.

Regarding Claim 9, Jones et al. teach the method in Claim 1, according to the appropriate paragraph above. Jones et al. also teach using various scanning systems including CCD array systems (see Col. 17, lines 46-55), which are also used in digital cameras. Jones et al. do not

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teach the digitalization unit as a digital camera. It is well known in the art to use a digital camera to capture visual information on a subject of interest. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a digital camera for the digitalization unit in the method of Jones et al., to provide faster digitalization of the bank note data over conventional scanner systems.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen Yam whose telephone number is (571)272-2449. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Porta can be reached on (571)272-2444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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THANH X. LUU
PATENT EXAMINER